

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1527

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, CY, TU
SUBJECT: TURKISH IMMIGRATION TO NORTHERN CYPRUS

REF: (A) STATE 130934; (B) DAO NICOSIA 011200Z JUNE 77;
(C) NICOSIA 1068

1. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DETECT ANY PATTERN OF MAINLAND MOVEMENTS INTO NORTHERN CYPRUS SUGGESTING RESUMPTION OF ORGANIZED IMMIGRATION. AS WE NOTED REFTEL (C) HOWEVER, THERE CONTINUES TO BE A LIVELY AND STEADY FLOW OF MAINLAND TURKS IN AND OUT OF FAMAGUSTA. WHILE MANY IF NOT MOST OF THESE MAINLANDERS ARE BONAFIDE TOURISTS, OTHERS ARE WORKERS WHO COME HERE IN SEARCH OF WORK ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS WITH TOURIST STATUS. THESE "TOURISTS", WHO AT ANY GIVEN TIME ARE SAID TO NUMBER ROUGHLY 15,000, STAY FOR VARYING PERIOD OF TIME, FREQUENTLY FIND EMPLOYMENT (AS WAITERS, GAS STATION ATTENDANTS, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, ETC.), AND EVENTUALLY LEAVE OR SETTLE IN MORE OR LESS PERMANENT STATUS.

2. AS FOR THE MAINLAND SETTLERS WHO ARRIVED IN 1975 AND
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EARLY 1976, WHO WERE ALLOCATED LAND AND HOUSING, AND WHO RECEIVED SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES FROM GOT CHANNELED THROUGH "TFSC", THEIR NUMBERS NOW SEEM TO BE DECLINING FROM AN ESTIMATED HIGH OF 15-17,000. AT LEAST THIS IS THE IMPRESSION OF INFORMED TURKISH CYPRIOT SOURCES WHO IN PAST STRONGLY RESENTED INFLUX OF MAINLANDERS FROM LESS DEVELOPED PARTS OF TURKEY. AND IT IS AN IMPRESSION

REINFORCED BY OBSERVATION OF PASSENGER SHIP DEPARTURES FROM FAMAGUSTA, WHERE THROGS OF HEAVILY LADEN MAINLAND VILLAGE TYPES CREATE COLORFUL CONFUSION. PROBABLE REASONS FOR THE OUTFLOW, IN OUR JUDGEMENT ARE 1) THE PHASING OUT OF GOVERNMENT SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES; 2) DISCOVERY OF MANY SETTLERS THAT THE ROAD TO QUICK, EASY RICHES DOES NOT NECESSARILY LIE IN NORTHERN CYPRUS; 3) TURKISH CYPRIOT RESENTMENT TOWARD MAINLAND IMMIGRANTS AND 4) UNAVAILABILITY OF FURTHER LAND FOR DISTRIBUTION (UTILIZATION RIGHTS ONLY) TO MAINLANDERS.

3. REGARDING REPORTED ARRIVAL OF 100 TURKISH MAINLAND IMMIGRANTS IN LATE MAY, DAO SOURCE PROVIDING THIS INFORMATION HAS PROVED RELIABLE IN THE PAST. IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, THE INFORMATION WAS FRAGMENTARY AND OBTAINED THROUGH SENSITIVE MEANS WHICH PRECLUDE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE IMMIGRANTS WERE MET BY BUSES AND TAKEN TO RECEPTION CENTERS AS IN THE PAST, WHETHER THEY CAME AS A DEFINITE GROUP OR AS INDIVIDUALS, OR WHETHER THERE WERE OTHER INDICATIONS SUGGESTING POSSIBLE GOT OR TFSC INVOLVEMENT.

4. ON BALANCE, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE CLEAR POLITICAL RISKS, THE SHARP TURKISH CYPRIOT REACTIONS, THE ADVERSE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES, AND THE NEBULOUS ECONOMIC BENEFITS WHICH APPARENTLY LED TO THE TERMINATION OF THE EARLIER IMMIGRATION PROGRAM LAST SPRING (1976) STILL MITIGATE AGAINST THE RESUMPTION OF AN OFFICIALLY ORGANIZED IMMIGRATION EFFORT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE SITUATION AS CLOSELY AS WE CAN AND REPORT ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS.

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